

Two New Productions Make Washington Debut This Week

"The Firefly," with Emma Trentini, Comes to the National, and Philip Bartholomae's New Farce Will Be Seen at the Belasco.

By JULIA CHANDLER HANE.

At the close of the last act of "The Firefly," at the Academy of Music, in Baltimore last Friday night, I was conducted to the dressing room of Arthur Hammerstein's distinctive star, where I found her just the Trentini of the new comedy opera in which Mr. Hammerstein is this season presenting her, for there seemed no difference between Nina, "The Firefly," and Emma Trentini, the tiny mite of humanity to whom God gave not only a voice which has won for her the reputation of being one of the most melodious voices in the world, but the imperious will which furnishes an inexhaustible supply of color, vivacity, magnetism, piquancy, and charm to her acting.

After her delightfully naive greeting I commented on the fact that she seemed not to have stepped from her role of the street singer of the opera even in her dressing room. "Why, no," she exclaimed in the liquid voice of the South, whose intonation expressed surprise at my remarks. "They are the same—Nina and Trentini. Did you not know that the man who wrote the story of 'The Firefly' knew me? He made it around me. And the man who wrote the music, he also knew me, and so he colored his score to suit my voice. I like best vivacious parts. It was great fun making Victor Herbert's 'Naughty Marietta,' in which I appeared the past two seasons, but 'The Firefly' gives me a chance to display not only my voice, but my histrionic talents as well. Nina and Trentini, they are almost the same."

The man who wrote the story referred to by the tiny diva is Otto Hauerbach, and the composer of the music which she so enjoys is Rudolf Friml, and Trentini is right in her declaration that the little singer in the new opera is just herself. Like "The Firefly," Trentini was poor in this world's goods, but endowed with the voice divine. Like the little Italian Nina created by Mr. Hauerbach, Mr. Hammerstein's star began her climb up the ladder of fame in church choirs, and it was while singing in her native Maglietta, Italy, that some wealthy townspeople had the good judgment to discern an operatic career in the child's voice. A fund was raised and the little song-bird was sent away to study under the famous Lombardi. In two years her master declared her ready for the operatic stage. She was but fourteen years of age when a place was secured for her at the La Scala, Milan.

It was in Milan (after spending four years singing obscure parts, but working indefatigably all the while) that Mme. Melba heard the little mite, who is all voice and vivacity. It so happened that Oscar Hammerstein was at that time scouring Europe for talent, and that Melba had signed a contract with the great impresario to appear at the Manhattan Opera House which was to open the following season. Conquered herself by the beauty of the voice of the little Trentini, Melba wired Mr. Hammerstein that she had a "find" for him. Hammerstein obeyed her summons and in just three hours after he heard Trentini he had a five-year contract with her.

During two seasons under the management of Oscar Hammerstein, Trentini sang important roles in "Carmen," "La Mascotte," "Louise," "Musetta," "La Boheme," the doll in "The Tales of Hoffman," "Talia," "Folies and Melodrama," and "Nedda" in "Pagliacci."

Arthur Hammerstein, who is presenting Emma Trentini in this first opera by Rudolf Friml, "The Firefly," which opens a week's engagement at the National Theater to-morrow night, is the second son of the distinguished grand opera impresario. The son seems intent on following in the footsteps of his noted father, and from his record it seems that he has succeeded. Anyway, it was Arthur Hammerstein who discovered Trentini's versatility, and highest possibilities. It came about in this city when Cleveland, who was appearing in "The Tales of Hoffman," fell ill one afternoon and word was sent to Mr. Hammerstein that she would be unable to go on as in the evening performance. There was no understudy, and Mr. Hammerstein was placed in a great predicament. He thought of Trentini, but she was already

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Garden—"Pictures and Vaudeville."

singing two roles. Just the same he phoned her at the Willard Hotel and told her of his dilemma. In her then most uncertain English the spirited young singer told her manager that she was not entirely strange to the role; to hurry Cavalieri's part along to her, and she would promise to perfect herself in it before night.

Somewhat dubious Mr. Hammerstein sent at once for his stage director, and with just one hour's rehearsal Trentini was letter-perfect, and that night she sang three roles in "The Tales of Hoffman."

"Which do you like the better, grand opera or the lighter work?" I asked the little song-bird when she had finished telling me how greatly she liked the life story of "Nina." "The Firefly," she replied her own.

With just enough accent in her speech to give it piquancy she answered me. "That depends on how I am feeling," she said, with a smile. "That depends on what I am feeling. I am just myself, not tired with too many performances. I most enjoy my lively roles in comic opera. I love grand opera, too, especially little Titia in 'Follies and Melodrama.' That is an artistic part to the last degree. But I have never had any role I became so much a personal part of as I do in Nina, the street singer of 'The Firefly.'"

I could go on writing you reams of the enthusiasms with which Trentini bubbles over, especially concerning her love of Washington folk, but what's the use when this little devil of grand opera, as she is called, told me Friday night that she would be in the audience of the National Monday night, just to show them how glad she is to be in Washington again.

Philip Bartholomae, the new playwright, who loomed on the farical horizon last season, will be well represented in local playhouses this week. His "Little Miss Brown," which was produced by William A. Brady at the Forty-eighth Street Theater, New York, August 25, will make its Washington debut at the Belasco to-morrow night. So intent was Mr. Bartholomae upon putting his message of laughter on the boards that he financed his first farce, "Over-Night," for it, told in order to obtain a hearing for it.

"Over-Night," when presented at the Belasco last season, proved just a silly bit of nonsense, which should not be condemned on that score, however, especially since it succeeded in putting over a good deal of good humor with himself (and the rest of the world), for something like two hours and a half. "Little Miss Brown" is the promise of fulfilling the same mission.

Mr. Bartholomae will also present the Washington premiere of his one-act farce, called, entitled, "And They Lived Happily Ever After," at Chase's to-morrow night, which is likewise declared to be built on the "Over-Night" plan.

Edith Taliaferro's visualization of "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm," most delightful and original girl creation of Kate Douglas Wiggin, returns to Washington this week, coming to the Columbia Theater. The pen of the great Taliaferro's portrayal of Rebecca last year have not forgotten its charm.

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That quaint little personage, Madge Kennedy, with a coterie of players, including William Morris, a comedian of merit, who need no introduction to Washington theatergoers, will give the first performance of "Little Miss Brown" that has ever taken place outside of New York, where this farcical digression had its enviable vogue of three months at the Forty-eighth Street Theater. This laughable proposition comes to us for the purpose of shattering tradition and incidentally put in over two hours and a half of unmythical humor. The cast is exceptionally large for an offering of this kind, and elicits the services of such favorite players as Richard Taber, Charles Stanley, Olive Harper Thorpe, Mary Malcolm, Sydney Macy, Elsie Hitt, Tom Lemonier, and others.

"Little Miss Brown" is in three acts, enhanced with appropriate scenic and stage effects that make each scene stand out with comic-like humor. Pleasant are the recollections that take us back to one of last season's successes, "Over-Night," and "Little Miss Brown" is the second of the same prolific author, Philip Bartholomae, penman of what he calls his "naughty little farce," which he has put in a class by himself. He knows human nature backward and forward, and he knows how to make a comedy of it. "Little Miss Brown" is looked forward to at the Belasco this week.

Chase—"Polite Vaudeville."

Philip Bartholomae, the author of "Over-Night," and of "Little Miss Brown," will present at his latest farce one-act hit, "And They Lived Happily Ever After," at Chase's this week. The comedy, which will be given in two acts, is a rollicking farce, "Married for a Day." Both acts are brimful of laughable situations, bright lines, and witty hits, and charming musical numbers. Mr. Bartholomae has engaged a metropolitan cast, and among them will be found Madge Kennedy, Charles Baker, Lester Pike, Bertha Gibson, Frankie Grace, Hazel Ford, Lew Shoss, and many others. The country store still continues to be an attraction, to be continued Tuesday night.

Lycum—"Auto Girls."

The management of the Lycum Theater will present for next week Teddy Bismond's "Auto Girls." The ensemble will be presented in a two-act rollicking farce, "Married for a Day." Both acts are brimful of laughable situations, bright lines, and witty hits, and charming musical numbers. Mr. Bartholomae has engaged a metropolitan cast, and among them will be found Madge Kennedy, Charles Baker, Lester Pike, Bertha Gibson, Frankie Grace, Hazel Ford, Lew Shoss, and many others. The country store still continues to be an attraction, to be continued Tuesday night.

Cosmos—"Vaudeville."

"The Legend of the Murrumbidgee River" is the title of the new play presented at the Cosmos Theater this week. It is the most production offering ever attempted in this house. Its story tells of the coming of Burke, whose spirit has been embodied in the play, a mysterious and wonderful tale of a thousand years where it was once when he was slain by the traitor Klen, only to reappear and then return again in the midst of a thrilling and wonderful story, to be heard the young audience.

WHAT WASHINGTON THEATERS OFFER PLAY-GOERS FOR THE CURRENT WEEK

Emma Trentini
National

Edith Taliaferro and Archie Boyd
Columbia

Madge Kennedy as
Little Miss Brown
Belted

Countess Olga von Hatzfeldt
Academy

Mildred Staller
Lycum

Theodore Bendix Chase
Chase

Alice Lazar Gayety
Gayety

COMING TO THE THEATERS

Belted—"Whirl of Society."
The first Winter Garden show ever sent on tour and coming direct from its long engagement at the Lyric Theater, Chicago, after an all season's run at the Winter Garden, New York, the Messrs. Shubert will send this city on November 18, 19, 20, and 21, the Belasco the famous "Whirl of Society" entertainment, which has captivated amusement seekers in New York and Chicago.

The entertainment contains many evidences of lavish expenditures and offers its own proof of the existence of a startling salary list, which includes Al Jolson, Ada Lewis, Fanny Brice, Cabell and Cabell, Lawrence O'Grady, Melville Ella, the Courtney sisters, Claudia Carlstadt, Florence Cable, Oscar Schwarz, Laura Hamilton, Lee Harrison, and a chorus of sixty.

Belted—"Gaby Dealy."
Gaby Dealy, the highest paid and most talked-about woman in the world, will appear in Washington for five performances at the Belasco Theater, beginning Thursday night, November 21. The celebrated French woman will give two matinees, on Friday and Saturday.

Miss Dealy comes here supported by the entire New York Winter Garden company, and will, as in "Vera Violetta," which is the piece in which she appeared in the Winter Garden last winter. Prominent in her support are Barney Bernard, Lee Harrison, Arthur Stanford, Paul Nicholson, Dorothy Parker, Melville Ella, Harry Pilmer, Clara Palmer, Ernest Hare, eight madcaps, and fifty stunning Gaby girls from the boulevards and the Great White Way.

National—"The Woman Hater's Club."
The story of A. H. Wood's newest imported musical comedy, "The Woman Hater's Club," which will be the attraction at the National next week, shows how little it is to oppose the fair sex. You and Mal Von Esenberg, an army officer, disappointed in love because of an imaginary misunderstanding with his fiancée, Marie Wilton. The major organizes a woman hater's club, which aims to save its members from the clutches of the fair sex. All goes well with the club until the major's nephew becomes a member of the club.

As the story moves on toward the climax, the major's nephew, who is a member of the club, is left by one, until none is left but the major, and then he capitulates and folds his sweet heart, Marie, in his big arms. And thus is made and his calm, ambitious route by woman's wit and affection.

Columbia—"The Trail of the Lonesome Pine."
Edna May and her troupe have booked Eugene Walker's play, "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," with Charlotte Walker in the title role. The play, which is

Academy—"Life's Shop Window."
The coming engagement of the new sensational drama, entitled "Life's Shop Window," by Victoria Cross, which will be presented by Mr. Cliff Gordon at the Academy next week, should be well received, especially by those who have read the book of the same title from which the play was drawn and which has been creating much comment everywhere. The drama will come invested with particularly elaborate stage settings and electrical effects, and the cast will include Theodore Gambie, Ollie Cooper, Alfred Britton, Emory Blunkell, Harry Hughes, Ruth Hayes, Maude Grafton, Goldie Bantle, and several others.

Gayety—"The Dancers."
"The Dancers" will be the attraction at the Gayety next week, presenting a two-act musical farce called "Dance the Dancers," with both book and music by Louis Errol. Fats Carter, formerly

Chase—"Polite Vaudeville."
An event deemed of great importance in polite vaudeville will be David Belasco's personal presentation for the first time in this city, at Chase's, next week of "The Drama of Oude," which ran for two consecutive years at the Duke of York's Theater, London. It is based, it is said, upon an actual episode occurring during the terrible Sepoy rebellion in India. A representative Belasco company will portray the various English and Hindoo roles.

The leading comedy feature of the bill will be the Broadway comedian, Stuart Barnes, in a new laughable dissertation, with songs and satire, on the plight of a would-be benedict.

Third in order will be J. C. Nugent and company in "The Regular." Miss Robbie Gordone will give fourteen posing reproductions of famous statuary. De Calion, "the tallive Englishman on the tottering ladder," is another special feature. Young and April are included in their diabolic dexterity and bubble bursting. Other attractions will be the piano organ recital at 1:30, 7:30, and 9:30, and the Animated Weekly photoplane pictures of current news events.

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leading comedian with Blanche Ring in the title role. In the supporting cast will be seen Nan Engleton, a charming prima donna comedienne; Kittle Mitchell, a vivacious ingenue; Kate Prior and Bettie Davidson; Ben Pierce, a German comedian; Alf P. James, a character actor popular in burlesque; Johnnie Walker, a clever impersonator of Scotch types; Charles Raymond, Frank Chamberlain, and Fred Reese. Mr. Errol has staged his own piece and is said to have introduced some novel scenic effects, notably a moving train. The chorus of attractive young women has been selected with regard to their singing ability as well as their pleasing stage presence.

Lycum—"High Life in Burlesque."
The "High Life in Burlesque" company, a merry organization, will be the attraction at the Lycum this week.

The show promises to be a little bit more than is usually understood by the term, "burlesque." The fact is that of later years the term has been misquoted. Kitter and vaudeville have been offered under a title which in past years was a brilliant satire on some popular story, set to music and replete with wit and humorous situations. The management of "High Life in Burlesque" has returned to this quality and offers a good cast, handsomely costumed and brilliantly mounted production.

Gala night will be Friday when the successful country store will be repeated.

NEWS OF LOCAL THEATERS

Editor's note—This column is devoted exclusively to Washington playhouses, their management, productions, and the stage folk who will be seen in this city either this week or in the very near future.

The de Koven Opera Company, presenting the elaborate grand opera revival of "Robin Hood," which has been attracting such unusual attention among music lovers the past six months in New York, will be the Thanksgiving attraction at the National Theater.

Al Jolson, who is said to have put the whirl in "The Whirl of Society," coming to the Belasco next week, is keen on automobiling and he made a cross-continent tour of the country from New York to San Francisco, this summer, in twenty-six days.

"A Scrape of the Pen," is one of the latest New York successes to be booked for early appearance in this city.

The Belasco Company, presenting "The Drama of Oude," at Chase's next week, comprises E. J. Ratcliff, Jack Standing, Harry Rose, John Thomson, W. S. Phillips, E. H. McCollum, and Eleanor Scott L'Estelle. The latter supported Cyril Maude in the original London production.

Robert Hilliard in "The Argyle Case" will be the Thanksgiving attraction at the Columbia Theater. It is said to be one of the biggest dramatic successes of the season, and more powerful even than his former vehicle, "A Fool There Was."

"The Country Store" at the Lycum is proving a great success. Several weeks ago a big hit was made when a little play was presented to one of the patrons. A new feature is introduced every Friday night.

Nellie Revell, here last week as the Mamma Samberly representative for the "Whirl of Society," which will be seen for the first half of next week at the Belasco, was the first woman advance agent in America.

Ollie Young, in Chase's bill next week, was the originator of hoop rolling in vaudeville. He is also a champion diabolite player.

The summer travels of Nor McCall, the travel lecturer, took him again down through the Balkan states, and the two most important kingdoms, Serbia and Bulgaria, will form the subject matter for one lecture in his course with which he returns to the Columbia Theater late in February.

From choir girl to the "Little Devil of the Opera," is the road traversed by Emma Trentini, who will appear in "The Firefly" at the New National Theater the week of November 11.

Charles Phillips, who has just reached the city to herald the coming of Charlotte Walker in "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," says Kluge & Erlanger attribute the success of the play, in no small degree, to the wonderful reception accorded it here on its opening last October when all dramatic records of the season were broken.